Τὸ Ἀγαθὸν Ἀνθρώπινον.

A TRACT OF MANS Chiefest Good.

By MATHIAS BROWNE, Doctor of Physick.

Domine! creasti nos propter te, & inquietum est Cor nostrum, donec perveneret ad te.
S. Augustinus Lib. Meditation.

LONDON,
Printed by *Thomas Harper*. 1652.

A

TRACT

OF

MANS Chief Good.

By THOMAS BROWNE
Doctor of Physick.

TO THE
Right Honourable
ELIZABETH,
Counteſſe of
LINCOLNE.

Madam:

IT is not without reaſon, nor contrary to example, that

I offer up to your Honour these indigested Meditations; the undeserved Favors that I received from the Honourable, the Lady Elizabeth Gorges, *your Mother; now I am confident a glorious Saint in Heaven; with the continuance of the same from your selfe, necessarily obliges me to an ingenious confession: I am bold therefore under fear and humility, to prostrate these my Lines before that Divine mode-*

moderation of mind, which alwayes hath holden for acceptable all things that in the least savoured either of Learning or Vertuous Labours: Humbly beseeching pardon for what is amisse in them: the zeal that I ow to your Honour commanding me to consecrate it to your Name. Favours from Superiours bind only to a thankefull acknowledgement, when as the sole thought of a requitall argues an arrogant

presumption: And therefore my way of satisfaction for your gratious bounty, shall now be to admire your Noble Disposition, which I alwayes honoured: Others perhaps may perform more or protest lowder; but I that know a grateful heart to be the best sacrifice for so overflowing a goodness, take the boldness to subscribe my selfe to be as I am, Madam,

Your Honors most
humble Servant.
Mathias Browne.

TO THE Christian Reader.

Courteous Reader.

THou haſt heere the ſcattered Meditations of ſome ſpare houres, at firſt intended for private uſe, but by the importunity of ſome Friends expoſed to the publick view. After I was overcome for to let them

them see the light, I had thoughts to have adorned every Chapter and Meditation, to make it the more authentick with Annotations at the end, citeing every Author, that I was beholden to to speak in his own language, endeavoring to halt after the scarce immitable method of that most Learned and never enough Renowned Schollar, *Hugo Grotius* in his *De jure belli & pacis*. But other imploy-

ment

ment on the one ſide, and ſolicitations on the other, hath thruſt it into the Preſſe as thou ſeeſt it, only with a few Marginall Quotations: What thou findeſt amiſſe in it, with candor excuſe; what good, imbrace and give glory unto God, the Authour thereof taking of it in good part from me his unworthy inſtrument, who am

Thy Friend.

Mathias Browne.

ment on the one side, and solicitations on the other, hath thrust it into the Presse as thou seest it, only with a few Marginall Quotations: What thou findest amisse in it, with candor excuse; what good, imbrace and give glory unto God, the Authour thereof taking of it in good part from me his unworthy instrument, who am

Thy Friend.

Mathias Browne.

The Preface.

ALmighty God, the fountaine of all Being, who to manifest the glory of his Power, and the riches of his Goodnes, made all things out of nothing, subject to the course of time, and corruption of the Earth: when hee had distinguished the confused Masse of things into the Heavens, and foure Elements, the Earth as a mother was impregnated with a fecundity of innumerable seeds of all things, and furnished with nourishment to give entertainement to that which shee had borne and brought forth. Thus having all the furniture of this inferiour Globe: Of these Creatures,

tures, ſome ſtill being fixed, and the ſeeds maintained, till the end of all things, and that determined time, which the unſpeakable Creator hath ordained for the emptying of thoſe ſeeds which hee endued the Earth withall. Other ſome, that is to ſay, Irrationall Animalls, hee drew wholly from the Earth at the beginning, planting ſeed in them, and providing food for them from other Creatures. Thus after God had Created the Firmament, as a Pavillion ſpangled with ſtarres, and gathered the diffuſed Light, uniting it to the two bright Lamps of Heaven, that that riding, and they running, like fiery Chariots, might not only rule the Day and Night, but alſo the better diſtinguiſh the Dayes from the Nights, and more harmoniouſly divide Seaſons, Weeks, Months, and Years: And having made the fruitfull Earths embrodered Pavement adorning it out of the Treaſure of his Sovereigne Goodneſs, with all things beautifull, that

might

might cause delight, inriching it by his bounty with all things profitable and expedient, as well might become so excellent an Architect; Having provided his chear, hee sought him a guest, and his house being built and furnished, his next care was to finde him out an inhabitant. Furthermore God sayd, Let us make Man. Man, the great Worlds Epitome, Man the Escbutcheon whereon the Eternall Wisdome hath pourtrayed all the Titles of the most excellent Beauties of the World, bee participating something with every thing. With inanimate Creatures in his being composed of the fowre Elements; with Plants, not only in his composition aforementioned, but in having a nourishing and feeding power; with Irrationall Creatures, as in the former particulars, so in having a certain voluntary motion, appetite, anger, and a power enabling him to feele and breath. Lastly, with intelligent incorporeall natures in reasoning

ſoning, underſtanding, judging, and in purſuing of vertue and a good life, which is the chiefe end for which hee was Created. So that the immutable Eſſence Creatour of all things, ſeemed by little and little, ſo to collect and knit together ſundry differing natures that all created beings, ſhould become one analogically in Man, whoſe body was more variouſly framed: Scias non eſſe hominem tumultuarium & incogitatum opus: Inter maxima rerum ſuarum natura nihil habet quo magis glorietur, aut certe cui glorietur. As a moſt pretious Temple wherein the Image of God ſhould afterward bee enſhrined; and being formed, as it were, by Gods proper hand, it received a greater dignity and beauty, both in proportion and ſtature upright, thereby to put him in mind whither to direct the religious ſervice of his Creator.

- Seneca lib 6 benefic. cap. 23.

Os

Os homini ſublime dedit cœlumq; videre
Juſſit, & erectos attollere ad ſydera vultus. Ovid Metamor.

This Tabernacle thus wrought, as the groſſe part yeelded a maſſe for the proportion to bee framed of, ſo had it by the bleſſing of God before inſpired, a ſpirituall thing of greater excellency then the red Earth, which offered it ſelfe to the eye only. This is that which Philoſophers call the Spirit, which ſo prepareth that worke to the receiving of the immortall ſoul, that with more agreement the ſpirit and body have growne into acquaintance, and is ordayned of God, as it were, a true love knot, to couple Heaven and Earth together, yea a more divine nature then Heaven is to a clod of Earth, which otherwiſe would have beene unſociable. This ſpirit is the chiefe, immediate inſtrument, whereby the immortall ſoule

beſtoweth the Exerciſes and Faculties in the body, that paſſe too and fro in a moment, nothing in ſwiftneſs comparable to it, nothing in nimbleneſſe neere it, which when it is depraved by any occaſion, either ariſing from the body, or otherwiſe, then it proves an inſtrument unhandſome for the performance of thoſe actions that require the uſe therof. Thus ſpirit, though far trãſcending the Body, yet is not comparable in pureneſs and excellency, unto that breath of life which God breathed into Adam, *whereby hee became a living ſoul. An immortall ſoul Gods well beloved, which fell from his mouth into this mortall priſon of the fleſh, that which advantagiouſly is marked with his ſtamp and Image, and that which beareth the rayes and lineaments of this great Majeſty, on which the Creator hath diſtended his royall purple. And as heertofore* Aaron *wore upon his Robe the whole world, embrodered with Gold, in the ſame maner our ſoule beareth*

Cauſinus Holy Court

beareth in its Liveries all created excellencies, being lively representations of the perfections of the Creator. So subtile that the strongest and sharpest sights cannot penetrate the contexture. Faith only teacheth us it is a substance which is not a substance of Elements, nor a substance of God, but a substance created of nothing, by the word of God, reasonable, intellectuall, spirituall, alwayes active, alwayes lively, so capacious, that nothing in the world, but God can repleniſh it; So insatiable, that nothing but he can satisfie it; being a perfect and pure substance, far off removed from corruption, endowed with a faculty of like quality, pure, immortall, and answerable to so divine a subject, carrying with it an instinct science, obtayned neither by precept, nor practice, but naturally furniſhed therwith, wherby its able by one universall, and simple faculty, to performe so many variety of actions, as the instrument by which it performeth, carrieth an

Humano quidem ingenio inacceſſum videtur Tauſel. de vita & morte, lib. 2. c. 30.

apt inclination thereunto: As to make it a little plaine, compare the skill of Painting with the ſimple and uniform facul y of the ſoule; the faculty as ſimple, and one, yet could Apelles therewith uſe both the groſſe and the ſmall Pencill; he could draw a line conſpicuous to the eye a far off, and ſo ſubtile that ſcarce diſcernable neere at hand; he could apply himſelfe by his uniform faculty, to all the parts of the moſt exquiſite beauty. So then theſe three, we have in our Nature to conſider; The Body from the Earth, (and with ſubmiſſion to better judgements) the ſpirit from vertue of that ſpirit which hatched that great Egge of Chaos, and the ſoule inſpired from God, a nature eternall and divine, not fettered with the body as Plato and others, would have it, but handfaſted therewith by that golden claſp of the ſpirit, whereby the one untill the appointed time bee expired (and the body become unmeet for ſo excellent a ſpouſe) joieth in the other.

Now as it is not possible to passe from one extream to another, but by a medium, and no means is there in the nature of man but spirit; by this only the body affecteth the mind, and the body and spirit affected, partly by disorder, partly through outward occasions minister discontentment, as it were, to the mind, and in the end break that band of fellowship wherewith they were both linked together. This affecting of the mind, is not any impayring of the nature thereof, or decay of any faculty therein, or shortning of immortality, or any such infirmity inflicted upon the soule from the body, it being spirituall, and not obnoxious to corporeall passions; the other grosse and earthly, far unable to annoy a nature of such excellency; It's only then such an indisposition and such a discontentment as Organs out of tune gives to the Musitiã, or a rough and rugged Pencill to the curious Limner, which only obscureth the shew of either art, not at all diminishing

that faculty which with better instruments would fully content the eye with a fairer pourtraiture, and satisfie the eare with more pleasant and delectable harmony. So that as the Instrument is of more particular use, so is the soule the lesse impeached; and as more generall, the more impedited, both from variety and perfection of action; the spirit then being its chiefe instrument, if it be disordered either in temper, or lessened in quantity, or intermixed with strange vapours, and spirits which most of all worketh annoyance, and causeth great disturbance in crossing the soules most absolute intention.

Thus I have cursorily runne over these three, viz, *the Body, the Spirit, and Soul: speaking little of the former, referring the Reader to* Gallen Vesalius *and others, who have largely discourſed of that subject, mentioning and insisting on the other no further then they might conduce to my pur-*

pose,

pose, in giving the Reader a glimpse of the most excellent and wonderfull Creature Man, Steward of the Creation, sent by God as a Creature to support the World, govern Common Wealths, people Heaven, and adorne the conversation of Angels, who being the morning Starres mentioned in Job, incessantly prayse God. Men are the evening stars fashioned by the hand of the Almighty, with the same beauty in proportion, for the accomplishment of the same end, and performance of the same Office. S. Chrysostom in Genes.

O most Glorious Lord God! at whose presence all powers doe shake, at whose becke all creatures obey, who by thy power hast compelled all things out of nothing, and by thy infinite wisdom hast spread the Light, ballanced the Clouds, and shut up the Sea as with doores, who by the counsell of thy will, createdst man to thine own similitude, making him for the time to come, coe-

ternall with thy ſelfe. What is man that thou ſhouldſt be ſo mindfull of him, or the ſon of man that thou ſhouldſt regard him? when I taxe my own leyſure but with the cheap expence of conſidering my bodies admirable Compoſure, of different natures, Celeſtiall, Terreſtriall, Angelicall, Beſtiall, Corporeall, Spirituall, greater then the world, leſſe then the world, the richeſt pearle and the baſeſt foyle, the Image of God and a piece of clay: If it be ſound and whole, it reſiſteth the ſpirit; if ill it afflicteth it: how doe I love my body as my companion, and eſchew it as my enemy? how doe I hate it as my clogge, and reverence it as my fellow heyre? when I cheriſh it, then am I ſtung with the luſts of it: Its a flattering enemy, and a treacherous friend.

My ſpirit ſometimes untractable and doting, other ſome times troubleſome and unquiet; now a little recovered from its weakneſs; preſently again infeebled with the fear of death, the

King

King of terrours; now obedient, then again rebellious; this houre trembling and with horrour expecting; the next with sighes and importunities desiring; sometimes fixed, then astonished at its own unconstancy. O my conjunction! O my alienation! that which I fear I embrace, and that which I love I fear; before I make war with my body I am reconciled, and before I am reconciled I am at variance; what a strange mystery is this?

O eternall Essence! as I am thine by the title of Creation, so fix all my desires, so direct all my labours, and so dispose of all the powers and faculties of my body and soule, that they may be wholly imployed in the service of God, happy in himselfe for ever, in whom there is no change, nor shadow of turning. Sith thou dwellest not in Temples which are unclean, and a Shrine cannot be a Sanctuary unto thee; sanctifie my body, and since thou hast made it fair as the Firmament, which

we

we see enamelled with so many stars, which resplendently shine as lightned Torches before the Altar of the Omnipotent; consecrate, O God! this Tabernacle of my flesh, that it may be a Temple for thy holy Spirit to dwell in for ever. Let the Altar of my clean heart alwayes send up unto thee the sweetest perfumed smoaks of holy Meditations, faithfull Prayers, and chearfull thanksgivings: Let the pure light of my faith and godly conversation shine ever before thee and men: Let the bread of life stand ever ready upon the pure and pretious table of my heart; lock up thy Law and Manna within me, speaking comfortable things unto me from thy mercy seat: Suffer nothing to enter in there that is unclean, but sanctifie me unto thy selfe, and be thou sanctified in me; for all that which is most excellent in creatures, is not for the creatures who possesse it: Light is in the Sun, but not for the Sun; Waters in the Ocean,

but

but not for the Ocean; the all-ſatisfying excellency, who gives brightneſs to the one, and rivers to the other, would that both tend to the commodity of men, intending man for his own ſervice: O let me never therefore keep to my ſelfe, that which Providence hath given me for the Almighties uſe, leſt I commit a Sacriledge in the great Temple of the God of Nature. Let me never reflect on my ſelfe in any thing, nor ſtrive to draw all to my ſelfe, as if all were made for me, leſt I oppoſe my Judge, and make my ſelfe a Corrivall to Soveraign Majeſty, but living to thee, and loving of thee, in the end I may live, and to all eternity enjoy thee the fountain of bliſſe, and be ſatisfied with thoſe Rivers of pleaſures, which are at thy right hand for evermore.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Concerning Good in Generall.

THE Greeke Word ἀγαθὸν, which signifies good; *Plato* derives ἀπὸ τοῦ ἄγειν, which signifies to lead; the words derivation importing its Nature, becauſe by its attraction it offereth a kind of violence to bring the minde to it ſelfe; Good, being congruous and convenient; Evill, pernitious and repugnant: hence the former naturally irritates deſire, and begets love; the other cauſeth miſery, hatred, and

Seneca Ep. 118.

Burgerditius in Idea Phil. nat. cap. 2.

trouble. As in every Creature by Nature there is an inbred principle of selfe preservation, whereby it eschewes what is evill; so likewise a fervent appetite, and earnest endeavour for the obtaining of a good which may be most agreeable to it selfe: And therefore *Aristotle* in this sence is to be understood, when he defines good from the latter, ὃ πάντα ἐφίεται *quod omnia appetunt.*

Lib. 1. Eth. cap. 1.

For it is not the Waters end to extinguish the Fire, because it is hurtfull, but that from them the water its own likenesse might arise, because good; neither doth the fire consume and dry up the water, but out of selfe preservation, lest it should be extinguished not for the others destruction.

So it is in living Creatures; the Lamb hates not the shape and life of the Wolfe, but with trembling feareth its own hurt; neither is

the chiefe desire of the Wolfe to mischiefe the Lamb; but out of selfe love for sustentation he tears it and devoures it.

Man doth not detest man, but for those Vices that are in man; men envying not the gifts of Nature, Monies, Lands, Goods, or the Honours of Great Personages, solely out of hatred and mallice to them, but out of selfe love to themselves, fearing lest they should fall under their greatnesse and power.

Mars. Ficini in Platonem in Oratione tertia.

Every Creature being guided by its first naturall instinct, which in the least Creature is more then the wisest are able to reach unto, or comprehend. All things receiving both their commission and direction from the Almighties *fiat*: Hence *Orpheus* very well,

Μοῦνος γὰρ τούτων πάντων οἴηκα κρατύνεις.

So that as according to the variety of things there springs diver-

lity of appetite; so the forme of good and evill is manifold.

For some Creatures there are that by an inbred desire, without any fore-conceived knowledge with eagernesse pursue good, and with velocity shun evill; others by an elicite or outprized appetite, *id est*, an earnest desire excited and directed from the foregoing knowledge of the object, are bent to good, and averse to evill.

Francis. Eustach. De Bono & fine in 1. part. Ethic.

The former never erring from the prosecution of what is good and eschewing of what is evill, it being planted in, and flowing from the nature of each Creature; the latter not being innate take things oftimes upon trust, following that which is seemingly good, but indeed is evill, and shunning that which appeareth to be evill, but indeed is a reall good; such a false glosse oftimes is put on the best things.

For although the ſoule in the body be like a Queen in her Pallace, yet this Princely, nay this Great Kings Court is oft ſpoyled with the rubbiſh and refuſe of earthly ſtreams and mouldy affections, being ſo much taken with the party-coloured flag of vanity, as its forgetfull of the ſupream good, without which there is no true happyneſs.

How is the Eare taken with light Ayres, and vain diſcourſe? the Touch with ſoftneſs and effeminacy; the ſickly Appetite pampered with variety of dellicates; the Smell not pleaſed till gratified with diverſity of fragrant odours; the Eye of the body obſcuring the Eye of the mind, where ſence inclines to concupiſcence, and affection to affectation; that curious modell which ought to be a directreſs to the other ſences, becoming the principall Organ of

errour to the affections: and although it gaze till it be dazled, yet its desire is never satisfied, finding an object of affection, pretending love when it is clear contrary perverted by lust. As Divine *Plato* hath it very well, ὅταν ἡ ψυχὴ μετὰ τοῦ σώματος ἐπιχειρῇ τι συνοῆσαι δῆλον ὡς τότε ἐξαπατᾶται ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.

Plato in Phæd.

When the soule is the most friendly to the body in making use of her counsell and assistance, then is she the most infatuated, obscured, and deceived.

Aspirations and Meditations on the first Chapter.

O Sacred Unity! O incomprehensible Trinity in Unity! whose Essence very far exceeds the

the possibility of humane apprehension; for who can dive into the secrets of the Almighty, or give a reason of the actions of the most High?

Though it be life to know thee, and make mention of thy Name; yet our firmest knowledge is to know that we know thee not as thou art, neither can we know thee or see thee so fully, till this same veyle be rent, and curtain of our flesh drawn. Our silence concerning thee being our safest Eloquence, confessing thee without confession, that thy Glory is inexplicable, thy Greatness above our capacity and reach.

Thou art above, we on Earth, we Creatures the workmanship of thy hands, thou our Creator.

How wonderfull are thy works, O Lord, and thy paths past finding out! O how blind is man since he fell from his first innocen-

cy! how doth he wander out of the way, and grope in darkness? how is his will perverted, his understanding obscured, the brightness of that everlasting light dimmed, the unspotted mirrours of the Divine Power blemished through the impairment of that sacred impresse which at first was enstamped on him?

The soule incumbred by the elicit desires of the senses, the spirit clogged and obscured by the body; for the soule remaining in its prison of sluggish earth, earth by creation, earth by condition, earth by corruption, and from its first entrance taking possession of so dark a hermitage, it cannot see its chief good so clearly, till strugled from its Eclipse of flesh.

For if a man were all understanding, and had not this bright Lamp inclosed in a pitcher of clay, the beams would shine with-

out any allay of dimneſs throughout all hee did, neither could hee doe any thing contrary to his intellect, that divine beam eradiated from the increated light, in purſuance of the higheſt end it hath prefixed to it ſelf.

But, O Lord, as the Midianites were deſtroied by thoſe Inſtruments which thou didſt command thy ſervant *Gideon* to uſe; *viz.* Lamps, Pitchers, and Trumpets, ſo deſtroy in mee, O ſweet Saviour, thoſe Amalekites, even my own luſts, paſſionate and inordinate deſires, that my body being mortified and humbled, my ſoul may be enlightned with the ſplendor of thy ſacred ſpirit, and mouth tuned to thy glory: Open thou my lips, O Lord, and my mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy praiſe; for who can but praiſe thee the Fountain of good? who can but deſire thee the Haven of our reſt, in whom

whom all fulneſs, all ſaciety dwels.

S. Auguſt. in Soliloquiis animæ ad Deum.

And if for this vile body of ours thou wilt give us ſo great and innumerable benefits from the Firmament, from the Ayre, from the Earth, from the Sea, by light, by darkneſs, by heat, by ſhadowes, by dews, by ſhowers, by winds, by rains, by birds, by fiſhes, by beaſts, by trees, by multitude of hearbs, and variety of plants, and by the miniſtry of all thy Creatures.

O Eternall Excellency! how great, how good, and how innumerable are thoſe good things thou haſt prepared in our heavenly Country, where we ſhall ſee thee face to face? If thou vouchſafeſt us ſo great benefits in priſon, what wilt thou give us in our Palace? if thou giveſt ſo many excellent things in this World to good and evill men together, what haſt thou layd up for only good

men

men in the World to come? If thine enemies and friends are so well provided for in this life, what shall thy only friends receive in thy everlasting Kingdome? If there be so great solaces in these dayes of tears, what joy shall there be on the Marriage day? If our Jayle contain so great matters, what shall our Country and blessed Mansions do? O my Lord and God! thou art a great God, and great is the multitude of thy magnificence and sweetness: As there is no end of thy Greatness, nor number of thy Wisdome, nor measure of thy Bounty; so there is neither measure nor number of thy Rewards towards them, that long and breath after thee: O fix all the faculties of my soule, body, and spirit, upon thy Excellency! that Sathan by his battery may never storm, nor Lusts prevaile, nor the Worlds glittering tinsill

tinfill ſhewes allure my heart, thine by Creation, thine by Redemption, thine by Sanctification, that at the laſt when this ſame mortall ſhall put on immortallity, and this corruptible ſhall put on incorruption with all Arch-Angels, Angels, and the bleſſed Saints, I may celebrate thy praiſes to all Eternity.

CHAP

CHAP. II.

The Opinions of divers Philosophers, concerning the Chiefest Good, and the Reasons why it is so much desired by all.

LActantius mentions ten severall Opinions, citing likewise their Authors, concerning mans chiefest happiness. Lactant. Lib. 3. Institut. Divinar.

Epicurus placed it in the pleasures of the mind; *Aristippus* in the satisfaction of fleshly lusts; *Callipho* and *Dionomachus* supposed it

it might bee found in honesty and delight; *Diodorus* in the absence of pain; *Hyeronimus* in the non apprehension of sorrow; the Peripateticks in the goods of the mind, body, and fortune; *Herillus* in knowledge; *Zeno* in living so, as not to transgresse Natures limits; some of the Stoicks in the prosecution of Vertue; *Aristotle* in Vertue and Honesty.

But all or most of these Opinions may be reduced to these four, which are most frequent.

1. The first, with *Aristippus*, placing Mans felicity only in the delights of the body, as *Horace* termeth them,

— *Numerus & fruges consumere nati*;

whose ease is their heaven, and whose God is their belly, preferring the husks of a Prodigall child, before the hopes of an Heir apparent.

2. Others, eagerly pursuing honour,

honour, which oft-times proves but a rising step to make the unwary mounter come lower; their happiness built upon the quicksands of imaginary greatness, serving to no other purpose then to measure their fall.

3. The third sort, are *Gehezi* like, whose beating pulse will not forgo the touch of Gold, though they purchase a Leprosie by it, taking that for their happinesse which is an occasion of their infelicity, by which they are withdrawn from that supream good, which only can satisfie, which only can suffice.

4. The last, striving to find a happy rest in the restless contemplation of created beings, not at all recollecting their dispersed, nay oppressed thoughts, nor raysing the graduall affections of their souls to that sphear, wherin they may behold their beauties &

that

that in their native Orbs.

Good being the object of the ſenſitive, and ſpirituall appetite, is by all deſired, although the true not alwaies diſcerned.

Aquinas ſaith; *Quælibet potentia appetit objectum ſibi conveniens*; Every faculty in nature requireth ſuch an object as is fitting unto it. And therefore *appetitus* and *appetitum*, muſt bee fitted as juſt together, as *locus* and *locatum*, otherwiſe there would be a vacuity in Nature, as *Ariſtotle* well obſerveth.

Ariſtotle Lib. 1. C. 1. Eth.

But externall objects neereſt approaching, nay firſt touching the ſenſes, are repreſented to the ſoul by the common ſenſe, in a far better dreſſe then naturally they are attired with, which oft times cauſeth the purſuance of evill under the notion of good.

It will not therefore bee unapt for our purpoſe, to mention that which

which *Procopius* relates of a Wise man, who one day sought for the House of Conscience; and in a Vision it seemed to him hee beheld a City of goodly Architecture, beautified with five Gates, which had as many narrow paths ending in one large way; upon this way stood a Register, who took the names of all passengers to record them: beyond that hee see two Tribunes, attended by a great concourse of common People, who governed the inferiour parts of this City; above hee beheld a Cittadell, wherin a great Princess commanded, who had a Scepter in her hand, and a Crown on her head. By her side there was a Lady, very ancient and venerable, who in one hand held a Torch, wherwith she lighted this Queen; in the other, a Goad, wherwith she pricked her, if she governed not according to her direction.

The wise man amazed, asked in his heart what all this train meant, heard a voyce within him, which sayd; O man! Behold thy selfe ere thou art aware arrived at the house of conscience, which thou soughtest for.

These five Gates thou seest are the five Senses, the way where all meet is the common sense, all the people which enter into it by heaps, are the objects of the Creatures of the World, which first touch our senses, before they passe into the soule. This Register that writeth down the names, is the imagination, that keeps record of all things; these two Tribunes are the two appetites; the one called the appetite of concupiscence, which is ever in search after its desires; the other the appetite of anger, extreamly striving to strike at all obstacles that oppose its good, either reall or pr- nded. This

This masse of people which thou seest are the passions which make ill worke in the inferiour parts of this City; the Princesse in the Citadell with the Crown and Scepter is Reason; the Ancient and Venerable Lady by her side is Conscience, having a Torch to shew the good way, and a Goad to prick them that wander.

Now the reason why the soule is not satisfied with any created excellency, but shifts from Creature to Creature, is, because they are finite, its almost infinite, the desire and thing desired not proportionable.

From whence it must needs follow, that seeing no finite object, is able to fill up that gasping *Chasma*, and insatiable Gulph of the soules appetite, that therefore there must be some infinite object provided for it, which is able to fill it till it cry enough; so to

Aquin. 1. Quest. 7. Articulo 2.

conclude with this Corollary.

That the emptineſs of mans heart in the want of God, its chiefeſt good, is, the ſpur to all wickedneſs whatſoever.

Aſpirations and Meditations on the eleventh Chapter.

HOw is the ſoule of man more pretious then the Gold of Ophir dimned? How is the underſtanding once bright and reſplendent, more excellent then Rubies, and incomparably more deſirable then all created beings benighted and obſcured? How are the members of his body as ſtones of that Sanctuary, wherein this ſparke of Divinity was incloſed, poured out in the top of every ſinfull by-path? O

O how miſerable did man make himſelfe by his fall! who in Paradiſe was ſo perfect, that he knew his God that made him, his Wife at the firſt ſight to be a meet help for him, and the nature of all Creatures, as to name them aright.

Now come to this paſſe that by nature he can ſcarce diſcern his Creator from the Creature, his Saviour from his Deſtroyer, or his Comforter from his Tormentor, ſquandring all his dayes in vanity upon every high hill, and under every green tree playing the Harlot.

How deeply hath corruption tainted his heart, originall pollution depraved his will? what folly hath not had its ſeat in his minde, and left its footſteps in all the reſt of his actions?

His ſoule after it had left the good for which it was made, wandring at randome in the vaſt

emptineſs of Creatures iſſuing out by the gates of all the ſenſes to glut its concupiſcence.

All ſpirituall actions are hatefull to him paſſionately ſeeking after Riches, Pleaſures, and Honours, having no other Law in his paſſions, but the power of his bruitiſhneſs, making no diſtinction of things permitted or prohibited in the licence of all voluptuouſneſſe.

So then this immortall ſpirit when ſo fixed to the fleſh, and ſold to luſt, ſerves as an inſtrument for Divels in this life, and affords fewell for the flames of divine vengeance in the life to come.

But O thou bleſſed Saviour! who didſt pity us in our loſt condition, lovedſt us in our deformities, and as our firſt Parents tranſgreſſed in eating the forbidden fruit, thou waſt pleaſed to climbe the tree, bearing our griefes, and

carrying

carrying our ſorrows: O gratious Jeſus! who didſt overcome Satan, Death, and the Grave.

Wipe away from us the Mother ſin, and its after-births, even all our actuall pollutions.

Being Pleaſure and Pride were the two main baits that tempted our firſt Parents to diſobedience, the fruit being delightfull to the eye, and the effect promiſed, ſeemingly correſpondent to *Adams* ambitious deſire, to make him as God.

O grant therefore that by an eye of faith I may behold in thy paſſion, for my pleaſure, thy pain, and for my pride, thy ſhame and reproach! that I may behold thee in thy patience, enduring pain for my wicked luſt, in thy humanity having ſhame poured on thee for my wretched pride.

Thou the Lord of life ſuffering death; thou the Lord of life and

glory ſuffering ignominious diſgrace, as a Lamb pitifully ſlaughtred, as a Worm ſpightfully tread upon: So by thy enduring pains and painfull Death expiating my unlawfull pleaſure, and by thy ſuſtaining ſhame, ſatisfying for my ſhamefull pride.

Thus can I under one behold my ſelfe, and my wretched undeſervings in the mirrour of thy paſſion.

For how greatly thou lovedſt me, muſt be told me to keep me from diſtruſt, and what I was when thou ſo lovedſt me, muſt be told me to keep me humble, and make me everlaſtingly thankfull.

O moſt graciouſly aſſiſting Comforter! wheras my thoughts are heavy and creeping on the Earth, ſublime and elevate them, and as they are timerous and glancing at all objects, fix them on the right, as they are uncertain

and floating perpetually, let them for ever anchor in thee the God of reſt, the haven of felicity.

And thou, ſweet Jeſus, who by thy exaltation haſt raiſed them, ſtay them, and ſettle them by thy immutable ſtability.

O All-ſatisfying, and Infinite Trinity! O Incomprehenſible Unity! Let thy ſpeciall preſence poſſeſſe every corner of my heart, ſo ſhall it be filled, and vanity prevented, ſo ſhall it bee fortified to the diſappointment of ſin, luſt, and Satan.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Mans chiefest good is not to be found in bodily Pleasures.

NOT only *Aristippus* and his Sect, but likewise the *Turks* following their prophet *Mahomet*, place their chiefest happiness in bodily pleasures; the former are not much to bee wondred at, in respect of their stupidity, being ignorant of the Souls Immortality; who professing of themselves to be wise, become fooliſh, changing the glory of

of the Immortall, and Incorruptible Lord God, into an Image made like corruptible man, and to birds, and fowr footed beasts, and creeping things. They supposing that equall, nay finall destruction should betide both body and soul; which granted, the lesse absurdity will appear in that their tenent. Nothing (if it were so) seeming to be more desirable, and more to bee rejoyced in, then the pleasures of the body.

The Turks therefore are the more stupendious, who place their greatest beatitude even in the life to come, in carnall voluptuousnes, though they hold the Resurrection, and after that the Immortality both of soule and body.

This manifestly evidencing the transcendent blindnes of that bruitish Nation, not in the least maner apprehensive of that happinesse,

pineſſe, which is truly ſpirituall and perpetuall.

This Doctrine concerning future proſperity, their great Prophet *Mahomet* ſpeaking of in divers places of his *Alchoran*, as in one place, he ſaith, good men ſhall enter into Paradice, where they ſhall taſte moſt pleaſant Waters, variety of Apples, diverſity of Fruits, and enjoy women proper and beautifull, with every good thing; contrary to that of the Apoſtle, the Kingdome of Heaven conſiſteth not in eating or drinking, but in righteouſneſſe, and peace, with joy in the Holy Ghoſt; and then concerning the latter, our Saviour words do plainly contradict them, for in the Reſurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the Angels of God in Heaven.

Although this Opinion is too prevalent in the greateſt part of the

the World; yet the absurdity of it rather beseeming swine then men, may easily be evinced.

For the first, the chiefest character of mans good is meliority and perfection; yea it ought to make a man most absolutely good and perfect, therefore it is called the chiefest good, because it tends to the highest perfection; but carnall pleasures are not only impediments in respect of the bodies health, but hindrances in the free exercise of the soules functions and duties. Leffius de Summo Bono, Lib. 1. Cap. 1.

Nothing so obscuring the light of Reason; nothing so great a Canker to Civility as Gluttony and Exorbitancy, which is most wofully evident in the belly Gods of our Age; none being more stupid, none more foolish (not to say filthy) then they are, justifying *Platoes* Opinion, that pleasure is the Divels bait, because men like fishes

fishes are so much inveagled; or that of *Seneca*, Pleasure is the Devils nursling.

Seneca Epistola 121.

The reason is, when the minde is hoodwinked by pleasure, it can neither behold Virtues amity, nor with the least serious consideration reflect upon Vices deformity.

Sin by its eager alurements, making so vehement an assault upon the affections, that the breach being made, it casts a man headlong into the deepest crimes, and most detestible enormities.

Lessius de summo bono lib. 1. cap. 1.

For the chiefest good ought to adorne the mind, mans principall part; but pleasure is so far from making the minde the more illustrious, that in very deed, it doth not only hinder its performances, but is the cause of its brutish stupidity.

Againe, the chiefest good tends to a mans promotion, extraordinary excellency being its associate; it

it elevates a man above himſelfe, making reparation for his former loſſe: but pleaſure renders a man odious, baſe, and contemptible; hence that of the Poet:

—— *Epicuri de grege Porcus.*

Transforming Men into Swine, which whileſt they are intent upon their meat and drink, are fatted for ſlaughter.

Not God-like who is not in the leaſt taken up with the entertainments of corporeall pleaſures, as the miſled Heathen fabled their Gods were.

But being ſpirituall, and eternall, joyeth (to ſpeak according to humane capacity) in himſelfe, who is the Well-ſpring of happineſs, and true center of perfect and endleſs contentment.

What enemy, ſaith *Seneca*, was ever ſo contumelious, ever ſo inſulting over any man, as ſome mens luſts have been over them, whoſe Seneca Epiſtola 39.

feeble

feeble and exorbitant sensuality hath only this shaddow of a Plea for a pardon, because in doing they have suffered according to that of the Poet, :

Læta venire Venus tristis abire solet.

Besides, if carnall pleasures were the chiefest good, it would bee lawfull for a man to use all those means that might any way conduce to the bringing of him to that his desired end.

Then hence must necessarily follow, the maintaining of whoredome and adultery, gluttony, and drunkennesse, thefts, rapines, and slaughters, with every indirect way, whereby a man may come to the fruition of his pretended pleasure.

It being undoubtedly lawfull to seeke the attainment of the true and chiefest good, by all meanes which may be subservient to that end.

But

But these swinish Gadarens mistaking the object, take the same course, leaving no wickedness unattempted, no filthiness uncommitted, that may stand betweene them and their lewd desires; for he that placeth his chiefest good in bodily pleasures, to use the Apostles words once more; his god is his belly; because that is every mans God to whom he yields the greatest obedience, and in whom he placeth his supream good; but to illustrate this a little more take these three Arguments, every one of them as I conceive haveing much weight.

1. The fram of mans body is not any wayes fitted for it, it consisting but of two parts, as the Epicures Opinion is, that are capable of it; first, for the one they wish to be like Cranes, and the other like Sparrows.

2. Seeing man is spirituall and

intellectuall, pleasure only sensible; in following delight he descends to a thing inferiour to himselfe, but felicity must be *in summo* above him.

3. A man should be more miserable then the Beast that perisheth, if carnall pleasure should be his end; for they use pleasures openly and freely, whilst man is ashamed to use some pleasures in open view; then they do it without remorse of conscience; but man after he is satiated with pleasure is pricked in conscience; yet no man will be so bruitish as to say that beasts have any true felicity.

4. It is the Opinion of *Plutarch*, which with much confidence he avers, that if an Epicure knew he had but one houre to live, and were put to his choice whether he would spend that houre in sport or pleasure, or no, or do some noble

ble Act to eternize his name, that he would make election of the latter, and thereby condemn his own Opinion of felicity in pleasure.

Hence it is most manifest, the pleasures of the body do not only fall far short of the chiefest good, but justly may be ranked amongst the greatest of evils.

For they blind the mind, make war against Virtue, lead into all vice, they being the bodies infeeblement, the understandings palsie.

For as the body is deprived of sense and motion by the corporeall resolution of the nervs, occasioned oftimes by obstructions; so the spirit oppressed by sensuality, is wholly darkned without any sight or feeling of Religion, or any motion of works that concern salvation.

To live in fat, saith *Tertullian*,

is to ſhut up the gate of wiſdome.

There is a palſie of corporeall pleaſures, which waſte the ſpirit, and a Ptiſick that preſerves it.

Then it is moſt evident that voluptuouſneſſe, the ſtain of humane nature, makes thoſe that are followers thereof ignoble, baſe, effeminate, not to ſay deſpicable and bruitiſh.

Architas Tarentinus in Ciceron. in Caton.

To conclude then with that excellent ſaying of *Architas*, (aluding as I ſuppoſe to the opening of *Pandoras* Box) He ſaith, that there is no greater evill could be ſcattered or ſent amongſt mankind by nature, then ſenſuall pleaſures; for hence comes treaſons, murmurings, and ſeditious whiſperings againſt lawfull Governours, ſubverſions of Kingdoms, deſtructions of Common-wealths.

No act ſo egregiouſly vild, no wickedneſs, though never ſo notoriouſly apparent, will ſtop plea-

ſure

ſure in its full career.

All maner of lewdneſs, adultery, fornication, oppreſſion; and moſt commonly war it ſelfe, are the injurious Daughters of this accurſed Mother.

And ſith the ſoule is the beſt part which God hath inveſted man with, this harpy aſſaults that with the greateſt violence.

Luſt keeping full poſſeſſion, Temperance is turned out, Virtue and Pleaſure being no aſſociats.

Aſpirations and Meditations on the third Chapter.

GOod God, what ſtorms are there in this little World of man!

The concupiſcible appetite cra-

ving, the paſſions tyranizing, the ſenſes receiving objects that prove prejudiciall, the imagination chequered with thoughts that are without underſtanding, both hindering it, not diſtracting the ſoule informing lump, whilſt it is an inhabitant in this Tenement of Clay.

Where anger intrenches upon patience, cruelty upon compaſſion, ſenſuality and luſt upon continence and chaſtity, gluttony and exceſſe upon abſtinence and temperance, pride ſupplanting humility, and oppreſſion bounty.

So that the ſoule may well take up the complaint of the Kingly Prophet *David*.

Wo is me that I dwell in *Meſheck*, or ſojourn in the Tents of *Kedar*

And elevate it ſelfe with the ſame Prophets moſt eager deſire.

O that I had the wings of a Dove,

love, that my ſoule ſoaring aloft, might relinquiſh the ſhadowy comforts here on earth; where fooliſh mirth ſuperficially affects, vain ſorrow piercingly afflicts, troubleſome ambition tranſports, buſie covetouſneſs perplexes, watchfull luſt and impertinent amours, make their dayly ſallies.

O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death! ſeeing all things here below are Phyſitians of no value, giving of us over when once we lie a dying, and yet the death-bed hath moſt need of comfort.

Stand by me therefore, O bleſſed Saviour, in the pangs of death! do not leave me neither in bed nor grave, but after death be my Advocate at the ſacred Tribunall.

O let me uſe pleaſures to my beſt advantage, and not truſt them!

But for thee, O Lord my God,

who in mercy and truth canſt not faile me (whom I have ever found faithfull, and preſent in all extremities) though thou kill me, I wil put my truſt in thee.

Take me by the hand, as thou didſt thy righteous ſervant *Lot*, and lead me out of the *Sodom* of theſe bodily pleaſures.

For what profit can there bee in ſuch flighting Chymeraes, true Dreames, which have the diſturbances of ſleep, but never the repoſe?

Like *Heliogabalus* his banquet of Wax, leaving the Gueſts hungrier then it found them: or *Oromazes* inchanted Egge, promiſing the incloſure of all felicity and worldly happineſs; but broken, there iſſued nothing but wind.

Carnall delights being no ſooner conceived in the ſences, but like abortives, are conſumed in their birth.

Their

Their desires ful of disturbance, their accesse full of forced and turbulent agitations, their saciety accompanied with repentance and shame, passing away after they have wearied the body, and leaving it like a bunch of Grapes the juice whereof is extracted by the Presse.

I see, saith *Tertullian*, no greater pleasure in the world, then the contempt of pleasure.

Call mee therefore, O Lord, and if that bee not sufficient, compell me from husks to my Fathers house, where there is bread enough.

Bring mee from all outward things to my selfe, and from my selfe unto thee, that I may bee as like to thee in will and desire as I am in nature.

Let the all-chearing and life-breathing influence of thy free spirit quicken mee; let thy tran-

scendent

ſcendent love not only thaw my frozen heart, but inflame my affections, that the light thereof may captivate my ſenſes, both from all other lights and delights; Let it clear my ſoul from theſe groſſe vapours of fleſh and bloud.

That therby my underſtanding may know thee, my heart honour thee, my will obey thee, and all the faculties of my ſoul and body ſerve thee, with a moſt fervent reſolution, and effectuall induſtry.

To the amendment of my life, to the curbing and ſubduing of my paſſions, to the maintaining of good motions, and further proſecution of pious intentions and Religious endeavours.

That as hitherto I have lived againſt my ſelf, and without thee, ſo from henceforth I may lead my life for my ſelfe, in and by thee, ſweet Jeſus.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Mans chiefeſt Good conſiſteth not in Honours.

HOnor is heavy, when it comes upon the beſt terms.

Little knowes the inconſiderate, and improvident ſoul, during her ſojourning heere in this Tabernacle of Clay, the dangerous ſhelves of Ambition, which daily menace ruine, and deſtruction; for it is hard to ſay whether there bee more pride or ignorance in ſuch towring ſpirits, which are moſt apt to adde tew-

ell

ell to the fire of all inordinate desires, and as ready to consent, as Satan to tempt, willingly entring parley with their spirituall Adversary.

Now to give the Morall Philosophers definition of Honour.

Burgerdit. Idæa Philosop. Moral. Cap. 3.

Honour is an externall signe of some fore-conceived excellency in that party upon whom it is bestowed, by a lawfull and vertuous Superiour, giving him it as a reward of his worth, wherby the other may be encouraged to trace the same paths of vertue.

Out of which definition these few particulars must needs ensue.

1. That honour is rather in the person honoring, then in the person honoured.

2. It is by no means to be conferred upon a wicked undeserving man; this were to cast pearls before swine; for therby honour loseth its substance, and only retains

the

the ſhadow, being rather cuſtoms tributary, then vertues handmaid.

3. As it is not to be placed upon the unworthy, Ethicks will not give way, that a vile perſon ſhould bee keeper of ſo great a treaſure, being in reſpect of his baſeneſſe and ignorance, neither able judiciouſly to diſcern, faithfully to diſtribute, nor ſincerely to love the aſſociat of ſo great a Princeſſe.

For dignities oftentimes are more the favours of fortune, then cauſes of deſert.

I have ſeen, ſayth the greateſt of Kings, and wiſeſt of men, an evill under the ſun; in the place of Judgement, that wickedneſs was there, and in the place of righteouſneſs, iniquity was there.

What other goodneſs then can honours have in them, but what man ſtamps upon them? if he bee not good, they are not dignities, but

but indignities.

Let not fortune therefore confound the worke of Nature.

Virgilio Malvez in Epist. 2.

Our Lord God hath ſtamped the Character of the worthyeſt man, in the worthieſt and nobleſt part of man.

Principality therefore ſhould be meaſured by the intellect, not by Cities and Provinces.

Now how can Honour be the chiefeſt good, when it hangs on mans mouth, whoſe breath is in his noſtrils, and therefore hath no ſtability? as we ſee in the Jewes honouring of Chriſt; one day they would have made him a King, but within few dayes after crucified him.

And how many prudent experienced States-men may we hear and read of, that have ſate at the Sterns of Common-Wealths, whom the breath of the people (as inconſtant as the wind) hath in ſome

ſome paroxiſme and acute fit of anger or jealouſie (which they are frequently ſubject unto) many times caſt overboard ſuch as have ſteared and guided them ſafe in all their courſes through many civill tempeſts, and whom they once eſteemed their *Dioſcuri* and Tutelar Gods, ſo fickle and uncertain a tenure is the love of the Vulgar.

— *Neutrum modo mas modo Vulgus.*

There is no *Euripus* ſo turbulent and ſo full of reciprocations and countertides, or ſo ſuddainly changed from a calm to a tempeſt, as the Populace.

Therefore *Plutarch* well ſtiles them, Θηρίον ὕποπτον καὶ ποικίλον, a ſuſpitious, humorſome, and skittiſh Beaſt, that is oft reſtiffe, and caſts off his Rider.

So that a man may as well ſhape a Coat for the changeable Moon, as make any Government or Governor to pleaſe them long;

Divine

Divine Writ well backing of this; Man being in honour abideth not, but is like the beaſt that periſheth.

The ambitious deſire of honor may not impertinently be termed a forrain vice; for pride in man it alwayes ſeeks height, and man is even lowneſs it ſelfe.

What is man, if we do conſider him in his own nature, without the aſſiſtance of grace? but an excrement of impurity in his conception, a ſilly Creature in his birth, a bag and ſpunge of ordures in his life, and a bait for worms at his death.

Why then ſhould ſuch a Creature thirſt after honour, or ſuch a dunghill nouriſh pride?

All that we behold both above and beneath, on the right hand or left hand, in this great houſe of nature, ſerves as a leſſon of humility for us.

The Heaven though higher then

then we, by its continuall circumvolution, according to its first appoyntment, inceſſantly moves over us.

The earth which we tread under our feet, first being our Nurſe, after our Sepulcher; ſtill yieldeth its increaſe to the *Poſthumi*, *viz.* the Generation after us.

The little ayre we breath in, without which we cannot live, and the water which in its wonder hath ſwallowed up humane wiſdome, and the wiſeſt of humane Philoſophers, *viz.* *Ariſtotle*.

All theſe act according to the firſt Law, which the moſt wiſe Law-giver ratified and eſtabliſhed.

Vain man, only dayly tranſgreſſeth, whoſe body at the beſt is fain to be beholden to the ſpoyl of beaſts for its cloathing.

What glory then can hence accrue, or upon ſerious deliberation

what ſollid contentment can be found?

He therefore that ſeeks felicity and ſatisfaction in this reſtleſſe toyle, let him with meditation ponder the words of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, which run parallell with his courſes, *viz.* A wild Aſſe uſed to the Wilderneſs, who ſnuffeth up the wind at her pleaſure in her occaſion, who can turn her away?

All they that ſeek her will not weary themſelves, in her moneth they ſhall find her.

What is the World but a wilderneſs? what is honour but a breath proceeding from the noſtrils of their fellow Creatures? (the greateſt and ableſt of whom in few years may become breathleſſe.)

What is the impetuous honorling, but a wild Aſſe foundred in the way of his own chuſing, over loaden

loaden with his own burthen.

Homos est onus.

The Latine Aoage importing thus much.

When the soule and body have wearied themselves, the latter loaden with diseases, the former enforced to quit its hermitage, being to dresse her selfe for immortality; she first unties the strings of imaginary greatness, which makes her upper garment cleave to the World, and sit uneasily; thus having layd this fantastick summer robe aside, she is kept awaken with fervent prayers and penitentiall groans; for the bodies disturbance commonly proves the souls tranquility and rest.

When the flesh is unquiet and dwels in sorrow, then the spirit is most at liberty, freed from the petulant desires, and ambitious solicitations of those passions which in health are ever busie and rest-

leſſe till a ſad night of griefe inſtead of joy, uneaſineſſe in the room of quiet drawes the curtain, and lets both body and ſoule die in ſecret diſhonour.

For whatſoever ſeeming contentation and preferment we can fancy here, is ſhortly to be changed into tediouſneſs and ſadneſs.

It goes away too ſoon, like the periods of our lives, or ſtayes too long, like the ſorrows of a diſpairing ſinner.

Its own wearineſs, or a contrary diſturbance is its burthen, or it is eaſed by its reſolution into vanity or forgetfulneſſe.

Where then can there be any true felicity where there is either ſorrow or an end of joy?

It was a ſaying of the Ancients, that Nobility hath no better a character then that of ſanctity.

The race of men are men; but the race of ſoules are virtues.

And I do confidently believe, that if God by his divine goodneſs and clemency would at once be pleaſed to exterminate the ambitious deſire of Dominion out of the hearts of men; it would be far harder to perſwade men to bear rule then to obey.

Tell me then, O thou aſpiring ſpirit! how happy and peaceable that command can be which is alwayes accompanied with danger and diſquiet? fooled by ambition, which makes men believe that they command others, when themſelves are ſlaves both to it and others.

Behold the Shepheard who is an emblem of him that governs people, and tell me whether the flock ſerves him, or he the flock? to ſqueeze their milk, and take their woole doth not make him not to be a ſervant, but it makes him a mercenary one, and leſſe noble.

So he that commands, commands only for to serve, and to serve those that stoope to him only, that they may command him.

Why then should vain man busie himselfe in the toyls of an ambitious War, or the leavies of a great Estate, when in the mean time the last fatall gloomy night enters in upon him, and tels the world how like a foole he lived, and how miserable and deceived he dyed?

To end then with the words of our blessed Saviour, Whosoever exalteth himselfe shall be brought low, and he that humbleth himselfe shall be exalted.

Aſpirations and Meditations on the fourth Chapter.

O Being above all Beings! O uncreated nature! thou framer of the whole World! I ſet thee before me, I lift up my ſoule unto thee, who art the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, before whom the ambitious muſt ſtoope, by whom the humble are advanced.

Though by nature I am very ſinfull, and as ambitious as the very Angels that fell, and poſſeſſed with a ſpirituall lethargy, that nothing is ſenſibly prejudiciall unto my ſoule.

O ſweet & Omnipotent Saviour! raiſe me from the ſleep of carnall

ſecurity, as thou didſt *Lazarus* out of his Grave, that being by thy almighty power quickned from the dead, releaſed from the Grave cloaths, of ſin and ambition, disburthened of thoſe plummets which depreſſe my ſoule from mounting upwards.

My earthly members may be mortified and ſubdued, my ſpirituall affections, quickned and elevated to thoſe manſions above, prepared for the Elect, where eternity is the meaſure, felicity is the ſtate, Angels are the company, the Lamb is the light, God is the portion and inheritance.

How unhappy did *Adams* fall make him? how was his pride the cauſe of his ſhame, and his ambitiouſly ſuſpoſed riſe the cauſe of his downfall: his pretended deſire of light and knowledge confounded by Cymerian darkneſs and ignorance, his naked body and forſaken

forsaken soule left for ever to bewaile themselves in the horrours of a sad eternity? had not the second Person of the ever Sacred Trinity, so humbled himselfe that he left his Thron and took a Manger, left Heaven and lived on Earth.

Who being in the form of God thought it no robbery to be equall with God; yet he made himselfe of no reputation, taking upon him the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of man.

Then, O my soul, when the least desire of earthy greatness, makes any insurrection against thee, Look upon Jesus, the Authour and Finisher of thy Faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the Crosse, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

O wonderfull mystery! O exceeding

ceeding mercy! ever to bee admired, ever to be embraced.

Heer are all things in this thy Saviour hanging upon the Crosse, which may move thee to love him, and take off thy thoughts from imaginary greatnesse.

Will pity move thee? Heer is distresse never the like; Will duty? Heer is a person never the like: Will fear? Heer is wrath never the like: Will remorse? Heer are sinnes never the like: Will all these? Heer they are in a superlative degree for poor man: whose entrance into Being, is by the gate of not Being; who is as soon in sin, as in nature; whose birth is a punishment, whose life is a travel, whose death is a necessity.

Ponder then seriously, O my soul! what there is in dominion and greatnesse, before thou letst thy thoughts go out too much upon their enjoyments.

O Survey

Survey their false heights before thou settest thy foot upon their slippery precipice. For assuredly it is the ambitiously envious Serpents drift, to set thee upon the Pinnacle, that hee may the sooner bring thee to the ground, and levell thee with hell and destruction.

Contemplate therfore, O my soul, what this worldly honour is! which by the carnall man is accounted a rare Jewell, and worthy to be purchased by any travel, labour, or danger whatsoever.

Did not the love of this hinder the men of Jewry from making open confession of Christ, the Lord of life and glory?

Did it not also let *Pilate* from delivering Jesus, according as in conscience he saw he was bound? Did not the love of this, cool *Agrippies* and *Festusses* smoaking desires after Christianity, albeit they

they esteemed *Pauls* doctrine to be true?

Why then should any seeke to engrosse to themselves great things? much more covet a busie Throne, which upon the least decay of power, occasioneth the greatest sollicitude; nay in prosperity hath its worm.

Nero was not content with the fortune of the whole Empire, but put the Musitians to death, because they were more skilfull in the Science then he was.

And *Dionysius* the Elder, was so angry at *Phyloxenus* for singing, and with *Plato* for disputing better then he did; that he sold *Plato* a Slave into Egina, and condemned the other to the Quarries.

What other score therfore can this desire of honour be better put upon, then that of vanity? nay madnesse it selfe, as the Scripture termeth it.

The

The glorious Angells themſelves ſeek not honour unto themſelves, but unto God that Created them: and doeſt thou poore Earthworme deſire to bee glorified?

The twenty fowr Elders in the Apocalyps, took off their Crowns, and caſt them at the feet of the Lamb; and doeſt thou deſire to plucke forty to thy ſelfe if thou couldſt?

O vain man! O fond creature! How truly, ſaith the Prophet, is a man like unto vanity? whoſe ſpirit is light and troubleſome, his body bruitiſh and ſickly, his conſtancy in folly and error, his inconſtancy in good demeanour and pious purpoſes, his labour is vain, intricate, and endleſs, his fortune changeable, ſeldome pleaſing, never perfect, his wiſdome comes to him in the Evening of his Age, when hee can ſcarce gain time to

uſe

use it; his death certain, alwaies ready, never a far off.

Assure therfore thy self of this, O my soul! that there is no other way of greatness, then to be great in Gods eyes; and he that is such a one, is so secure from hurt, and envy, that hee oft times falls within the compass of compassion.

Regard then alwaies more those vertues which make a man good, then those that make a man great; so shalt thou live safe from the envy of men who measure goodness by greatness.

And having thy soul fixed by an eie of Faith upon Christ, the Rock of ages, God will bee thy hearts anchorage, and haven of perpetuall rest.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Mans chiefest good consisteth not in Riches.

IT is a true maxime that we have, *Corruptio optimi est pessima.* Those things which are most excellent and beneficiall in their use, are most dangerous in their abuse and miscarriage.

How seemingly good Riches are, need no demonstration; mens carking cares and unspeakable pains are sufficient proofs of their esteem.

And

And how deadly the abuſe of them is, many a ſoule feeles, that cannot return to complain.

For Satan, the envious Adverſary of mankind, importuning poor men to defert the Creator, and adhere to the Creature, cauſed the production of all that ſpurious offſpring, *viz.* vain glory and covetuouſneſs, being as I may ſay, the almoſt inſeperable aſſociats and ſhadows which attend upon that great ſubſtance.

Therefore the wiſe *Hippocrates* in his time deplored its ſad effects, and ſayd, the life of man was miſerable, becauſe inſupportable Avarice like unto a ſpirit of ſtorms and tempeſts had poured it ſelfe out upon mortals, tearming of it worſe then folly, it occaſioning a miſchiefe irreparable: It may well be called dotage it ſelfe, for when age inclines towards the Grave, Avarice prepoſterous to

Reaſon

Reaſon forceth men to reckon upon treaſure, when Death every minute threatens to cancell the Bonds, and out them from the World with no more gaity then at their birth they entred.

Thus are we mocked by our own ſins, vainly providing for the ſafety of life, when the Tomb lays claim to our wrinckles, and infirmity holds before our eyes times houre-glaſſe with the laſt grain of ſand ready to fall down; the ſoule buſiing its thoughts with letting long Leaſes, when it is ſuddainly to be turned out of its own weak Cottage.

It is no leſſe wonderfull to ſee how this earthly droſſe, which is of it ſelfe heavy, and therefore naturally ſinks downwards, ſhould raiſe up the heart of man, who Porpoiſe-like delights in tempeſts, and feeds on ſhipwracked greatnes.

And yet it carries a man up to a double pitch of pride, one above others, the other above himſelfe.

Above others in contempt, above himſelfe in his over eſteem.

The poor and proud is the wiſe mans monſter, but the rich and proud is no news.

It is no wonder to behold the oppreſſor big with pride, like the little Sea-Crab, who by chance finding the ſhell of a greater fiſh empty, enters into it without ſaying by your leave, and makes boaſt of a borrowed habitation.

This over-weaning conceit of Riches is like the *Trojan* Horſe, which doth bear fire and ſword, ſaccage and rapine in his bowels.

For from hence proceeds troubleſome ambition, bloudy rebellion, heaven defying ſacriledge, greedy rapine, perjuredly undermining treachery, and in a word, all that is horrid in nature.

I read that *Mizentius* the moſt barbarous of Tyrants, could find no greater cruelty then to tie the dead to the living; and why doſt thou then poor worldling joyn thy ſoul which is of a more divine nature then heaven, to a clod of ſordid earth, and faſten the thoughts of the world dead and languiſhing with God, who is nothing but life; this is not a ſimple tyranny but a ſacriledge.

Let not therefore Riches be the object of all thy thoughts, nor the bait of all thy hopes, nor the ſcope of thy contentments; make them not thy Tabernacle, thy Oratory, thy Propitiatory, nor the marks of thy Religion, leſt thou create a Temple to a little Divel of Silver, who will too ſoon ſeat himſelfe in the midle of thy heart.

I wonder why in *Eccleſiaſtes*, where the common Tranſlation ſaith, all obeyeth mony; an other

very ancient letter, and derived from the Hebrew, ſaith, mony rendreth all Oracles, for that is it which the word *reſpondere* ſignifieth.

But I may well ceaſe to admire, for in truth mony is like a familiar ſpirit, ſuch as heretofore Pagans and Sorcerers kept in ſecret places, ſhut up in a Casket, or in a dead mans skull; ſo that when they became any thing irreſolute, they conſulted with their Idoll, and the Divell counterfeiting voyces through wood or mettle, gave them their anſwers.

Now a dayes, the Devill mony is in the coffer of the covetuous, as in a Chappell dedicated to his name.

And the Infidell, if he have any buſineſſe to perform in his Family, thinks not at all to take counſell of God concerning it, nor upon it to make any appeale to his own

own conſcience; but refers all theſe enterprizes to the Devill of ſilver, and to the extravagant deſire of unlimited power, which gives him forth crooked Oracles.

Shall I ſeeth a Kid in the Goats milk, and make uſe of that power, dignity, and eſtate (which my ſuperior hath frankly beſtowed on me) to overthrow both him and his? do, ſaith the little Devill, ſince thou haſt him in thy power. Vide Plutarch in vitam Iul. & mortem Cæſar.

Shall I inhance two Livings to my ſelfe, when one flock is as much as I can well feed, and by doing ſo thruſt out another more able and worthy then my ſelfe, that the Labourers of Chriſts Vineyard may be fewer? do, ſaith the aforeſaid Oracle, if thou canſt either make mony or friends.

Shall I corrupt a faithleſſe Judge, whoſe ſoule I know to be ſaleable, and ſubborn falſe Wit-

neſſes, ingaging them by the ſtrength of corruption in a bad cauſe, that ſo I might be revenged of ſuch a man, whom I hate as death? yea ſince mony gives thee this power.

Shall I take *Naboaths* Vineyard by force and violence, to build and enlarge my ſelfe further upon the Lands of my Neighbours, without any limits of my Purchaſes, but the rules of my concupiſcence? yea ſince thou mayeſt do it by force of mony.

O unconceiveably wretched man art thou! who art ſubject to ſuch a furious harpy, who detains thee a priſoner and exile, yet keeps thee unſenſible of thy reſtraint and alienation.

If thou ſhouldeſt ſee a Chriſtian man in ſlavery under the great Turk, tyed in a Gally by the legs, there to ſerve by rowing for ever, thou couldſt not but pity him.

Lay

Lay but to heart thy own miſerable condition, and thou ſeeſt thy ſelfe aptly deſcribed, who ſtandeſt in captivity to a more baſe Creature then a Turke, or any other rationall perſon; that is, to a piece of mettall in whoſe priſon thou lieſt bound, not only by the feet in ſuch a ſort that thou mayeſt not go any where againſt the commodity and command of the ſame; but alſo by the hands that thou mayeſt not act; by the mouth that thou mayeſt neither ſpeak nor taſte; by the eyes that thou muſt not ſee; by the eares that thou mayeſt not hear; and by the heart that thou mayeſt not conſider.

So that thou muſt neither doe, ſee, hear, nor think any thing but the ſervice of the ſame.

Was there ever ſervitude ſo great as this? Doth not the word of Truth then ſpeak true, *Qui ſer-*

vus eſt peccati, facit peccatum: Hee that is a ſervant of ſin, doth ſin.

O thou ſelf conceited, and vain glorious worldling? Get thee but up to the top of that high Babel, which thy riches hath built thee, view it from the pinnacle, to the tottering baſis: Is it in thy walls thou putteſt thy confidence, built perhaps with bones, and dawbed with untempered morter, moyſtened with Orphans teares and bloud.

Theſe will be ſo far from being a ſhelter, that they will oppreſſe thee by their fall; for the curſe of the Lord ſhal remain in the midſt thereof, and ſhall conſume both their ſtone and timber.

Is it thy curious Garden or delightfull Orchard? I will make them as a heap of the field, as the plantings of a Vineyard. I will ſpoile the hedge thereof, ſaith the Almighty: I will downe with the

the ſtones into the valleyes, and diſcover the foundations therof.

Is it in thy Barnes, or heaped up Granaries? remember that unexpected diſmall doom of the rich miſer, Thou fool, this night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee, and then whoſe ſhall all theſe things be, which thou haſt provided?

Is it then thy ſilver and gold thou thinkſt will bear thee out?

Thy ſilver ſhall be caſt into the ſtreets, and thy gold ſhall bee removed, they ſhall not bee able to deliver thee in the day of the Lords wrath; they ſhall not ſatisfie the Lords wrath, neither fill thy bowells; becauſe its the ſtumbling block of thine iniquity.

What profit or pleaſure then can the ſacrificing to thy net and drag affoord thee? or what protection can bee expected from the Queen of heaven, for whom thou bakeſt cakes?

Leave

Leave off, O leave off betimes! plow no longer the air, nor ſow the ſand; but conſider all theſe externall things ſimply in themſelves conſidered, are neither good nor bad. *Quæ extra animum ſunt neq; bonis, neq; malis, annumeranda ſunt.*

The moveables of Fortune being ſcarcely to bee reckoned any part of our wealth, or amongſt the number of our goods.

For the true goods of a man are immoveable & immutable, which can neither bee plundered nor ſequeſtred.

A mans true wealth being alwaies imbarqued in the ſame bottome with himſelfe.

For extrinſecall and adventitious goods are not ſimply good, *ſed falſa & adulterina bona*, as *Seneca* ſtileth them; things that have the gloſſe and luſtre of good, but are not ſo indeed.

All

All eſtates and conditions in the world, ſaith the ſame brave Moralliſt, are equall: if a man will not change croſſes with any other, when hee ſees what comes to every mans lot and ſhare; much leſſe will he change felicities with any; for thoſe alſo are equall, if not in the ſcales of weight, yet in the ballance of juſtice; and if the freſhneſs of novelty makes the difference, its but the difference of a few daies aſſuefaction will preſently produce it to a Geometricall equality.

The felicities of this world are not in themſelves, they ſubſiſt in opinion only, and ſo become great or little according as they are apprehended, and they have the greateſt ſhare of them that beleeve they have it.

Dignity and riches are like two mountains, which ſeeme to poor underlings with their towring

ring heads to touch the skie, but to thoſe that are at the top, they ſeeme with their baſis to reach Hell.

There is no degree or condition of man, but is ſubject to ſaciety; wee ever deſire what wee doe not poſſeſſe, and our will ſince it lives under thoſe ſpheares which are in continuall motion, can never be at reſt.

Private perſons doe envy the greatneſs of Princes,& Princes the quiet repoſe of private perſons;yet will they never deſcend or reduce themſelves to this eſtate of life, but rather ſtill feare what they ſometimes deſire, as though they were aſhamed to become ſuch as they would ſeeme to deſire to have beene at firſt; according to the expreſſe words of *Alexander* the Great, which *Plutarch* records, *Si non eſſem Alexander in ſolio, Diogenes eſſe vellem in dolio.*

For

For that which wee doe, not that which wee ſuffer, deſerveth the name of evill.

And this doctrine hath beene delivered by that Eloquent Father St. *Chryſoſtome*, from the Pulpit ſaying, *Maximum fieri ex tribulationibus lucrum & ſupplicia mortalibus a Deo emiſſa, eſſe divinæ pietatis beneficia.*

To end then this Chapter with that excellent injunction of the bleſſed Apoſtle Saint *Paul*, which he injoins Saint *Timothy* to lay on the rich.

Charge the rich of this world, they bee not high minded, nor truſt in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to injoy.

Aſpi-

Aſpirations and Meditations on the fifth Chapter.

O All creating, previſing, providing, and all ſatisfying Eſſence!

I ſtretch forth my hands unto thee, my ſoul is for thee as ground without water.

Lord! I deſire not with the children of *Reuben*, to plant my ſelf in the Land of Gilead, becauſe its a fit place for Cattell, and to loſe my portion in the Land of Canaan, the Land of Promiſe.

But one thing I deſire of thee, and for that I will not ceaſe earneſtly to ſollicit thee, that I may dwell in thy houſe all the dayes of my appointed time.

Though

Though in this world thou giveſt me ſome reliſhes of thy goodneſs, which are, as I may call them, the firſt ſervice of this thy banquet; permit me not, O Lord, to take a ſurfet, but afford me ſome taſte of the things that are to come.

O Heavenly Father, I beſeech thee, make me (not to ſay too ambitious) but not at all deſirous of a great Eſtate; Riches and Reſt being the Parents of ſenſuall ſecurity.

But reſerve all thy hidden treaſures in ſtore for me and mine.

Yea, if it be thy holy will, feed us, O God, heere with the bread of affliction, and make us drunk with the water of tribulation, rather then in the leaſt maner to want the enjoyment of thoſe pleaſures that are at thy right hand for evermore.

Wean mee, O God, from the breaſts

breasts of this transitory World, with whose milk I have been too long nouriſhed; let the eſtimation thereof bee no better then its deſerts, which are light, unſtable, and momentany.

Incline my heart unto thy teſtimonies, and not unto covetouſneſſe.

Let mee no longer be taken up with trifles, and the deceitfull gaities of gold and ſilver.

But ſtrip mee of all my ornaments, rather then I ſhould bee hindered from making my approach without the Camp unto thy moſt holy Tabernacle.

Guide mee by thy wiſdome, attract mee by thy power; by thy love embrace mee in the armes of thy mercy; lift up by thy ſtrength my lumpiſh ſoul, baniſh from it all theſe terrene affections, and remove theſe ſcales of ſenſuality from my obſcured underſtanding,

that

that I may not look after those things that ruſt doth eat and moth conſumeth, but may ſeek thoſe things that are above, wher Chriſt ſitteth at the right hand of God.

So that from this Dunghill, this Dungeon, this baniſhment of earth; I may look upon my liberty, and behold thy glorious greatneſs in heaven.

O *Emanuel!* who ſuffered thy ſelfe to be tempted to the end thou mighteſt ſerve for a Mediator, for an example, and for a remedy to work our victory over all temptations.

When profit ſhall court me to the love of Riches; O ballance my ſoule with a moſt fervent affection to thy ſacred Majeſty, in whom all fulneſs dwels!

Every thing is moved by its proper weight to the place of its reſt; mans love is his weight, with his love he is carried whi-

ther ſoever he is born, above if it be celeſtiall, to earth if it be terreſtriall.

Abandon therefore, O my ſoul, all the affection thou beareſt to the things of this world, and then the want of them will neither be heavy nor grievous.

Draw up therefore, O ſweet Saviour, my delights, fix my deſires wholly upon thee, that as thou haſt loved and ſought after me, ſo I may ſigh, and long after thee.

I do not deſire to make greatneſſe my aym, nor Riches my ſcope, give me but godlyneſs with contentment, and I have enough.

What's greatneſs? but like a purple attire, which doth imbelliſh dirt becauſe it hides the uglineſs of it, but diſgraceth tiſſue becauſe it vailes its ſplendor.

And as for the latter, every thing is light where the Sun darteth

teth his beams.

But a Carbuncle, if you will have it glitter and ſparkle, place it in the dark, remove it out of another light, if you will ſee its own.

Naked virtue diſpoyled of dignities, and ſequeſtred from wealth is a gem that ſhews all its worth.

Two things, O Lord, therefore do I deſire, deny me not them before I die.

Remove far from me vanity and lies, give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me, leſt I be full and deny thee, and ſay, who is the Lord; and leſt I be poor and ſteal, and take the name of the Lord in vain.

Conſider therefore that nothing truly deſerves the denomination of good, but that which makes one ſo.

Can riches make thee honeſt?

can riches make thee learned? can riches make thee healthfull? can they make thee wise? can they make thee live more merrily? feed more heartily? sleep more quietly? Nay, do they not the contrary? canst thou by them buy off the Apoplexy, Cares, Death, much lesse the torments of the World to come? nay, do they not bring all these?

Marke what holy *Job* saith: The rich man shall lie down, but he shall not be gathered, he openeth his eyes, and he is not; terrours shall take hold on him as waters; a tempest shall steal him away as in the night; a burning wind shall take him away, and a whirlewind shall snatch him from his place.

Thou canst not then with thy gifts bribe God, neither will thy vast estate purchase his favourable aspect.

Where-

Wherewith ſaith the Prophet ſhalt thou come before the Lord, and bow thy ſelfe before the moſt high God?

Will the Lord be pleaſed with thouſand of Rams, or ten thouſand Rivers of Oyl? the Silver is mine, and the Gold is mine, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.

If that ſpeed not, go to Gods Serjeant Death, ſee if thou canſt ſee him not to arreſt thee?

Thou ſhalt find him with Gods meſſage in his mouth ſaying, ſet thy houſe in order, for thou muſt die; yet if he hear thee not, go to thy Diſeaſe, Deaths under Bayliffe, and ſee if thou canſt prevaile with him to forbear? he will anſwer thee with *Laban*, this thing proceedeth from the Lord, I cannot therefore ſay to thee either good or evil: In concluſion thy Diſeaſ wil ſummon thee unto death, death will arreſt thee to appear

before Gods Judgement Seat; the Judge of all flesh will passe his doom upon thee, and in all these, Riches availe not in the day of wrath.

I flie unto thee therefore, O crucified Jesus! on the Crosse I love thee; on the Crosse I adore thee; on the Crosse I believe in thee, who upon the Crosse didst give thy selfe for me.

What hath a man more then Riches, Honour, and life? All which thou didst bestow upon the Crosse to redeem me; for thou who didst create all things, didst hang naked on the Crosse! thou who didst think it no robbery to be equall with God, wert sorted with base condemned Malefactors! thou who art the Lord of life, didst suffer a most opprobrious death!

And that I may not lose this exceeding benefit, that thy precious bloud

bloud be not unprofitably ſhed for me;

I proſtrate my unworthy ſoule, and cry unto thee, not as the Jews did, to come down from the Croſſe, but which is more, to raiſe me up and faſten me unto thee; for they whom thou loveſt are known by nothing more then by thy imparting to them ſome part of thy paſſion: Save me, O ſweet Jeſus, for thy mercy ſake!

And being thoſe that will be rich fall into many temptations, and into the ſnares of the Devill, into many hurtfull and unprofitable deſires, which do drown men in all perdition and deſtruction.

Save me, O Lord, from my ſins! ſave me from the power of my ſpirituall adverſaries! ſave me from the deceits of this wicked world! ſave me from the flattering force of my own appetite, which is both the mightieſt and

baſeſt Tyrant that can be imagined.

O defend the dignity and glory of my ſoule! that it be not ſervile to my ſenſuall luſt! that it be not captivated to the familiarity and falſe delights of this its but borrowed habitation! In matters of this life make ſcarcity as welcome as plenty.

And although the Fig-tree ſhal not bloſſome, neither ſhall fruit be in the Vines; the labour of the Olive ſhall faile, and the fields yield no meat; the flocks ſhall be cut off from the fold, and there ſhall be no herd in the ſtals; yet will I rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my ſalvation.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Mans chiefeſt Good conſiſteth neither in the Contemplation of Created beings, nor in the practiſe of Morall Vertues.

When Satan the grand Adverſary of Mankind, cannot inveagle us by pleaſures, honours, or profits, wch are ſo baſe, as heeretofore hath been

been ſhortly demonſtated, and ſo far from giving the leaſt contentment or ſatisfaction to a thing ſo truly noble as the ſoule is; whilſt we live heer, this World being a place of baniſhment, a place of ſinners, a vale of miſery, a time of repenting, weeping, and wailing, the great Accuſer of Adams poſterity laboureth to hang us with a double hook, baited on the one ſide with fond ſpeculations, on the other ſide with reſting upon the ſuperficiall performances of holy duties, and practiſe of Morall Vertues; thinking by the one to fill, and by the other to quiet the immortall ſoul, which never can be ſatiated without the everliving and all ſatisfying Lord God.

And this hee doth firſt by tempting of us to the exerciſe of our fancies upon their objects, which imagination of ours, hee feedes with a thouſand fooliſh fantaſies

of

of imperfect ſhapes; ſometimes hee deceives with the conceit of being learned, either in the knowledge of Naturall Philoſophy, or underſtanding of the Languages, in the perfection whereof, hee perſwadeth us, lieth much contentment. Thus hurrying them into bootleſs curioſity, hee makes them give away their ſoules for nothing.

For the itch of impertinent and unprofitable Knowledge, hath been the hereditary diſeaſe of the ſonnes of Adam and Eve; many having periſhed to know that which hath procured their own periſhing.

1. Firſt then, let us conſider what an abſurd thing in Nature it is, that any thing ſhould bee long in getting, and ſhort in enjoying; but the Contemplation of created beings is ever in getting, ſo that it cannot bee long in fruition;

fruition; therefore no true felicity in it.

2. Our Contemplation is only in *posse*, what may bee, and to bee happy is *duci in actum*, to be drawn into action; but to say this *posse* may bee drawn into a perfect act were absurd; for there is no man can say, There is nothing but I know it; for we know not the essentiall form of any thing, no not of the most vild Creature.

It is the confession of the wisest of the Philosophers *Socrates*: *Hoc unum scio, me nil scire.* And *Seneca* saith; *Maxima pars eorum quæ scimus est minima pars eorum quæ nescimus: id est*, The greatest part of what we know, is the least part of what we know not. But if humane Contemplation bee not able to satisfie the mind, then the Divell hath a more deceitfull invention to delude us; and that is, to make us rest upon the practise of Morall

Morall vertues and externall performance of holy duties, propounding some forme of Religious exercise.

And hence it is, that hee hath begotten so many new inventions in the Sect-makers of our times, as of old times he hath done heertofore.

This is a Sea and a Labyrinth of distraction; heer the poor soul findeth a beginning, but scarce an end.

For this Religious Knowledge, is so variable through the multiplicity of curious wits, that the life of man is too short to take a view of this variety; moreover this exercise of holy duties, pretends so much of duty and obedience (yet indeed is nothing) but wil worship, and superstition, that men are afraid to neglect the earnest exercise therof.

Well doth our grand Adversa-

ry

ry ſee how to puffe up the minde in acquiring of ſuch Religious knowledge, and ſo to keepe the minde in ſuch reaſonable formes of ſervice, that the poor ſoul may never paſſe further then the outward Court of bodily performances, not once to look into the moſt Holy Place.

Thus hath hee blown up many which in their externall performances and knowledge, doe even feed and feaſt themſelves as men in dreams, ſuppoſing they have all things, yet indeed have nothing but a braine full of windy and wordy conceptions; ſo fruitleſs is the ſpeculation of Created beings, and ſuperficiall performances of holy duties, in reſpect of quieting the heart; for the ſoul cannot communicate with any ſuch comprehenſible things but only with God, who is a Spirit, and ſo able to fill the ſoul with

his presence, and quiet the restlesnes therof.

Aspirations and Meditations on the sixth Chapter.

Quis novit Dæmonis astus?

GOod God! how enviously subtile is the Serpent, mankindes inveterate enemy, that would perswade him to regard a Candle, and neglect the Sun; to seeke for satisfactory knowledge, where hee can find none, to leane upon shatterd reeds which will pierce and not support, to digge broken Cisterns which will drownd, and destroy, not quench and refresh.

What can the knowledge of all

all Creatures, if possible to bee attained, profit? if wee want the knowledge of the Creator, whom to know is life eternall.

Our best performances are crackt, sinfull, and unprofitable: our souls and bodies unclean, yea though we should wash our selves in snow water, and purge our hands most clean, yet shalt thou plunge us in the pit, and our cloths shall make us filthy.

Wo be to our commendablest life that we lead, if thou, O Lord, setting thy mercy aside, shouldst mark what we have done amiss.

Wherefore, O Father of compassions! by the rich treasures of thy mercies, by the truth and largeness of thy promises;

I humbly beseech thee, cast down thy favourable countenance upon mee, that my thoughts and desires may bee taken off, both from vain contemplation, Pharisaicall

ſaicall oſtentation, and ſeeming ſelfe ſatisfaction, and carried up unto thee.

O ſhew thy ſelfe to mee,
Or take me up to thee.

O Lord my God, thou haſt vouchſafed to create me after thine own Image, and to make me capable of thy ſelfe, fill this thy Image with thy ſelfe, for nothing elſe is able to ſatisfie it.

For thy loves ſake, for thy mercies ſake, come unto me, O thou that delighteſt to be with the Children of men! that with all the arms of my affections I may imbrace thee; come unto me and converſe with me now in this life, that afterwards thou mayeſt take me unto thee, and be my portion in the Land of the living.

O my Father, my Feeder, and Defender, my Lord, and my God! thou didſt not hold it ſufficient to create us in thy likeneſs, but aſſu-

medſt our likeneſſe on thee to redeem us with thy bloud, to purchaſe for us a heavenly inheritance.

From whence proceeds this, moſt loving Lord? from our deſires? no, they are low and ſordid; from our deſerts? no, if ſo, Divine Juſtice would ſoon hurry us to the place of the damned.

Is it then from thy neceſſity? O no! for an innumerable company of Angels, far more noble Creatures then we are, attend evermore to do thee ſervice and honour.

It is only then in mercy and love whereby thou art moved to delight more in abiding with us, then we are deſirous to enjoy thy preſence.

For we deſire thee in the weak ſence of our miſeries, thou ſeekeſt us in the infinite aboundance of thy mercies; we as wanting and expecting

expecting ſome benefits from thee; thou as more liberall then we are poor, art more ready to give, then we are either willing or able to receive.

Thou haſt with much earneſtneſs invited us, ſaying, O every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no mony come buy and eat; yea, come yee, buy Wine and Milk without mony, and without price.

Leſt I ſhould ſpend my mony for that which is not bread, and my labour for that which ſatisfieth not.

I come unto thee, O Lord, with the rejected Woman of *Canaan*, and crave of thee ſome crums that fall from the childrens table; thy children thou cheareſt with a perpetuall feaſt, they ſit at the table where thou ſerveſt them with all variety of ſpirituall dainties.

O Lord God, who haſt purchaſed

chaſed for them their places at this Banquet for the price which they coſt thee, for thy love and compaſſion ſake, give unto me I beſeech thee, ſome ſmall crums of their aboundance.

Give me the taſte of that pleaſant fare, that I may contemn the worlds honours, profits, and pleaſures, vain ſpeculations, and ſuperficiall exerciſes of holy duties, but that they may be performed by me in the uprightneſs and ſingleneſs of my heart.

Then ſhall my ſoule bleſſe the Lord, and all that is within me praiſe his holy name.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

There is no true happineſs in any thing beſides God.

THe harbour of mans heart is God, and nothing under God, nor nothing beſides God, nor any thing with God, but purely God, plainly revealing his fatherly face in Chriſt unto the believing ſoule, uniting himſelfe unto the ſoule, and the ſoule unto himſelfe in a pure act of a moſt glorious and comfortable communion, rather felt by experience

perience then known by diſcourſe, and more reall then verball.

The Philoſophers propound two things in their happyneſs.

1. Contentedneſs, or ſatisfaction of the appetite.

2. The continuance of that ſatisfaction.

For the firſt, to come to any thing but God, ſatisfieth not the appetite, becauſe he is only that infiniteneſs which the heart deſireth.

For this we are to know mans deſires are infinite and endleſſe, not triangle, as is the figure of the heart, but infinite according to that goodneſs which it once loſt in loſing God; and hence it is that all creatures are unable to give it any ſtable contentment, becauſe all comprehenſible things are of a finite condition; God only can accompliſh this reſt, being the longing of the heart is only after

ter him; as bleſſed Saint *Auguſtine* hath it well, *Domine tu feciſti me propter te, nec quieſcat anima mea donec veniat ad te:* Lord thou haſt made me for thy ſelfe, and my ſoule will not be ſatisfied till it come unto thee.

2. There is not only contentedneſs or ſatisfaction, but perpetuity and continuance of that ſatisfaction; and where this is wanting there ariſeth fear of loſeing that happyneſs we have, which begets diſquiet and anxiety, therefore no felicity; but this perpetuity is found no where but in God; all worldly things being but tranſitory, as excellently St. *Chryſoſtome* to this purpoſe, *Omnia bona mundi triplex interitus tollit, aut & ſe ipſis veteraſcunt, aut luxuriâ Dominorum conſumuntur, aut ab extraneis, dolo, vel fraude diripiuntur.* The good things of this World paſſe from us three wayes; either

they become old and worth nothing of themselves, or they are consumed by the Riot of their Possessors, or they are taken away by the deceit, violence, or cavillation of others.

Aspi-

Aſpirations and Meditations on the ſeventh Chapter.

WHom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth I deſire beſides thee? Thou art all in all: in thy preſence, O Lord, is fulneſs of joy; there is ſatisfaction and a bounding of the appetite, and at thy right hand are pleaſures for evermore, there is perpetuity.

What is the love of pious and devout ſouls heer helow, but a kind of remembrance of the firſt fair Sovereign, and moſt pure of all beauties, which is the Divinity? Plato in Sympoſio. Amor memoria eſt primi & ſummi boni, & puriſſimi pulchri.

My ſoul, O Creator, which is the blaſt of thy mouth, the image of

of thy bounty, the repreſentation of thy power, being at firſt pure and ſpotleſs, but now infected by the breath of the Serpent; it wanders up and downe ſeeking for a kind of perfection in vices, and exorbitancies, which is only to bee found in thee.

St. Auguſt. lib. 2. confeſſ. cap. 6.

Pride contends for height, and what is higher then God, who ſitteth upon Thrones, predominateth over Dominations, who governeth Principalities, and makes heaven bow under the ſhadow of his Majeſty?

Ambition paſſionately ſeeks after honours, and who hath more honour then God? who ſeeth glory to bee hatched in his owne boſom; for whom ſo many Altars ſmoak, for whom ſo many ſacrifices burne, under whom ſo many Diadems bow, to whom ſo many Scepters obey, before whom ſo many Empires, Kingdoms, and

ſtates, are but as a drop of dew. Power will make it ſelfe great, and who is more formidable, O my ſoul! then this great Judge? for whom Thunders roar, Lightnings flie, Thunderſtones ſhiver lofty Rocks, for whom Elements fight, and Nature dreſſeth up its Scaffolds to proſecute offenders, even in Hell; there being neither place, time, height, nor power, which hath ability to deliver it ſelfe out of his hands: Flattery and complacence will make it ſelfe to bee beloved; and what is more lovely then the ſweetneſs of the charity of this good Father, which diſtilleth like a Celeſtiall Manna, upon all the Creatures of the Univerſe?

Curioſity affecteth the ſtudy of Wiſedome; and what is wiſer then God, who ſeeth all wiſdome in himſelfe? who hath abyſſes of Knowledge in his heart, riches of eternall

eternall Sapience in his boſome; for whom Time hath no preſcription, Nature no veile, height no height, and Abyſſes no depth, who is Parent of Sciences, Creatour of thoughts, Treaſure of Eloquence, who dazeleth all humane ability, who taketh his ſages from among Ideots, and out of the Dumb rayſeth his Orators.

Lazineſs ſeeks out a life ſoft and peacefull, continually fixed upon its repoſe, and the contentments of the fleſh and ſpirit.

Where canſt thou find, O man! thy repoſe out of God, ſince it is he who is perpetually ingulphed in the delights of a pure tranquillity?

Luxury ardently deſireth pleaſures, and will ſatisfie all the deſires of his heart; and is not God the plenitude of joy & abundance, that never fails, a ſweetneſs in-corruptible, a feaſt which conſumeth not

not, a perpetuall theatre of comforts, a flood of moſt pure contentments, which floweth over all Paradice?

Avarice will poſſeſſe much; it ſtretcheth out the hands of a harpy over the goods of another: it garboileth the world, it diſquieteth the earth, it pleadeth, it wrangleth, it aſſails, it defendeth to ſatiate its covetuouſneſs, yet ſtill is hungry: what is the Eternall that poſſeſſeth all, but the Prime of the rich, the beauty of the fields, the luſtre of flowers, the fecundity of fruits, the wealth of Minerals, and the fertility of totall Nature?

Envy contends for ſupereminency; who is more excellent then the Creator of all things?

Choller will revenge; for it ſtriketh at Heaven, it troubleth the Earth, it cauſeth Lightning and Tempeſts, which rayſeth ſo many Tragedies in the world.

And

And who better knowes how to avenge ſinnes, then the Soveraign Monarch of the Univerſe, for whom exterminating Angells carry the Sword of Juſtice, for whom Hell reſerveth treaſures of flames eternall.

Seeing then, O my ſoul! the perfections that are, are in God, how can thy vertues but beare a ſingular affection towards him? why ſhould they not bee enamoured with his beauties? why not ſigh after his attractives, ſince they are his reall daughters?

As the Hart panteth after the water brooks, ſo panteth my ſoule after thee, O Lord, my ſoul thirſteth for thee as ground without water.

St. Auguſt. in ſoliloquiis animæ ad Deum.

O Lord! when ſhall I come and appeare before thee? when ſhall I ſee that day of Jubile, that day of unſpeakable joy, which God hath appointed for triumph

and rejoycing? when ſhall I ſee thy face?

O bleſſed viſion! A viſion I ſay which neither eye hath ſeene in this world, nor eare hath heard, nor heart conceived. A viſion that paſſeth all the beauty of earthly things; of gold, of ſilver, of woods, of fields, of ſea, of ayr, of ſun, of moon, of ſtarres, of Angels; for all theſe have their beauties from thence.

Wee ſhall ſee him face to face, ſaith the Apoſtle, and know him, as we are known.

Wee ſhall know the power of the Father, wee ſhall know the wiſdome of the Son, wee ſhall know the goodneſs of the Holy Ghoſt, we ſhall know the Indiviſible nature of the moſt bleſſed Trinity.

And this ſeeing of the face of God, is the joy of Angels, and all Saints in Heaven.

This

This is the reward of Life everlasting; this is the glory of blessed Spirits, their everlasting pleasure, their crown of glory, their game of felicity, their rich rest, their beautifull pallace, their inward and outward joy, their divine Paradice, their heavenly Jerusalem, their felicity of life, their fulness of bliſſe, their eternall joy, their peace of God that passeth all understanding.

This sight of God is that full beatitude, the totall Glorification of man, to see him that made Heaven and Earth, to see him that made thee, that redeemed thee, that glorified thee.

For in seeing him, thou shalt possesse him, in possessing him thou shalt love him, in loving him thou shalt praise him, for he is the inheritance of his people; hee is the possession of their felicity, he is the reward of their expectation,

ctation, I will bee thy exceeding great reward, ſayth hee to *Abraham* the firſt of the Patriarchs.

O Lord, thou art great! and therefore no marvell if thou bee a great reward: the ſight and fruition of thee is all our reward, all our joy, all our felicity, that through our Saviour wee expect, ſeeing thou haſt ſayd, That this is life eternall to ſee thee, and know thee our true God, and JESUS CHRIST, whom thou haſt ſent.

Jehovæ Liberatori Gloria.

ERRATA.

Page 24. line 3. read troad for tread, p. 29. l. laſt r. becauſe by it, p. 44. l. 13. for the other r. others, p. 69. in the Margent read Plutarch. in vitam & mortem Iulii Cæſaris, p. 85. l. 22. for either r. neither.

A Table of the Contents of this Book.

Chap. I. *Concerning Good in Generall.* p. 1

Aspirations and Meditations on the first Chapter. 6

Chap. II. *The Opinions of divers Philosophers, concerning the Chiefest Good, and the Reasons why it is so much desired.* 13

Aspirations and Meditations on the second Chapter. 20

Chap. III. *Mans chiefest good is not to be found in bodily pleasures.* 26

Aspirations and Meditations on the third Chapter. 37

Chap. IV. *Mans chiefest Good consisteth not in Honours.* 43

Aſpirations and Meditations on the fourth Chapter. 55

Chap. V. *Mans chiefeſt Good conſiſteth not in Riches.* 63

Aſpirations and Meditations on the fifth Chapter. 78

Chap. VI. *Mans chiefeſt Good conſiſteth neither in the Contemplation of Created beings, nor in the practiſe of Morall Vertues.* 89

Aſpirations and Meditations on the ſixth Chapter. 95

Chap. VII. *There is no true happineſs in any thing beſides God.* 101

Aſpirations and Meditations on the ſeventh Chapter. 105

FINIS.

Aspirations and Meditations on the fourth Chapter. 55
Chap. V. Mans chiefest Good consisteth not in Riches. 63
Aspirations and Meditations on the fifth Chapter. 78
Chap. VI. Mans chiefest Good consisteth neither in the Contemplation of Created beings, nor in the practise of Aforall Vertues. 89
Aspirations and Meditations on the sixth Chapter. 95
Chap. VII. There is no true happiness in any thing besides God. 101
Aspirations and Meditations on the seventh Chapter. 105

FINIS.